

Southeast News

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Preparation for Advent

ADVENT is a period of time four weeks before Christmas. The word "Advent" means coming and refers to the coming of Jesus as anticipated by the prophets and men and women of the Old Testament.

It is a time when we may prepare ourselves for the overwhelming joy of the Christmas Event. It gives us time to think about the significance of God entering the world fulfilling his promise and showing the true humanity as exemplified by Christ.

The First Sunday of Advent, November 28, is symbolic of a new beginning, and to celebrate this new beginning, the Visual Artists of the Charleston, Circular Church displayed their original work at the church, Sunday, Nov. 28.

Christmas Is a Power to Grasp

Christmas comes to remind us that there is a Power to grasp. The lectionary readings for Christmas Day (see Desk Calendar and Plan Book, 1976-1977, United Church of Christ, December 25, 1976) indicate this.

Isaiah 52:6-10: God's might over Israel's enemies and His mercy toward his people is manifested in this text. God's messenger announces that Israel's God has become King and He brings "peace", "comfort", and "redemption" to his people. Somehow, this good news did not come true in this form.

The church on Christmas joyfully proclaims that in Jesus; God comes to His people and establishes His reign in the world.

Ephesians 1:3-10 Paul, the messenger of Jesus Christ by God's choice, praises God for giving us through Christ every possible spiritual benefit as citizens of Heaven . . . especially allowing us to know that in His sovereign will all human history shall be consummated in Christ, that everything that exists shall find its perfection and fulfillment in Him.

John 1:14: John uses an early Christian hymn to tell the story that the "Word (Logos) became flesh and tabernacled

IN MEMORIAM

Robert V. Moss



"Death is at work in me, but life in you" — so wrote Dr. Robert V. Moss recently to the congregations of the United Church, quoting the Apostle Paul. Indeed life was at work in him for us and for the world. We mourn his death. Dr. Moss was the President of our United Church of Christ and a responsible world leader. The Associated Press obituary called him "a Bible Scholar who spoke out often and strongly in applying religious principles to controversial social issues . . ." It was this rare combination of Biblical scholarship and social leadership which prompted Southeast Conference leaders at our Annual Meeting in Savannah to award him the humorous degree of "Doctor of Professional Presidenti-ality."

Robert V. Moss has gone on to glory and left an empty place against the sky.

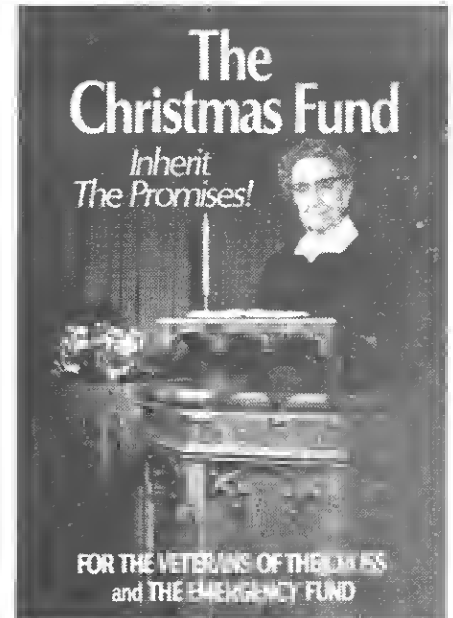
—David Beebe,
Chattanooga, Pilgrim

among us." He doesn't define the Word (Logos) for this is known in that early Christian community. The hymn affirms

[Continued on page 5]

The Christmas Fund

Inherit
The Promises!



FOR THE VETERANS OF THE WAR
and THE EMERGENCY FUND

Inherit the Promises

The Christmas Fund sends checks and Christmas greetings in the name of the Church to carry our affection and concern.

The Christmas Fund, administered by the Pension Boards, also helps throughout the year some ministers who actively serve. Ministers and their families hurt by illness, accident, or other tragedy beyond their own resources, receive practical help from the Emergency Fund.

The third way the Fund helps our ministers is through improving retirement benefits for qualified ministers on low pensions.

Christmas Fund materials, including free posters, folders and offering envelopes, are sent automatically to all churches. Only supplies needed in addition to those in the packets sent to the churches, should be ordered from the Pension Boards, United Church of Christ, 297 Park Avenue South, New York, New York 10010, who handle The Christmas Fund and emergency assistance. The Christmas Fund offering can be sent to the Southeast Conference office for the Pension Boards.

Ala-Tenn. Association Andalusia First Hosts S. Ala.-NW Fla. Association Meets

First Church, Birmingham, was the host church for the annual meeting of the Ala-Tenn Association held Sept. 24-25.

Discussion centered around the Statement of Faith or creeds. In small groups, each person was encouraged to express in writing a very brief statement of what he/she believed. Various creeds were discussed, including the Statement of Faith of the United Church of Christ.

All of this interest was surfaced by the suggestion made by General Synod that Conferences, Associations, and churches throughout the country make such a study and offer such proposals as they thought good. At the close of the discussion, a straw vote was taken on four options: 1) Replace the present Statement with another; 2) Write another Statement, to be used alternately with the present; 3) Revise the present statement; 4) Leave the present Statement as it is. The first two options received no votes. There were 14 votes for revision, while 28 votes were cast for leaving it as is. Some did not vote.

Per Capita dues were raised from \$1.00 to \$1.50 per member.

USING THE TIME

Beginning with an article in "Share" about Easter Workshops, I suggest we might use the same approach for the Christmas holidays when again time, personnel and children are available. Consider setting up a series of one-day workshops with a different key person in charge of each workshop assisted by others who will also sign up for specific days. Topics may include Christmas Gifts to Make, Christmas Art, Music, Drama, and Storytelling. The schedule may begin with a group time of singing and a short film, then break up into age groups for work on the project of the day.

Milk and cookies could be served, and a sharing time of individual and group accomplishments and experiences would round out each session. Consider the possibilities.

Please Note: The current address of Cooperative Film Library is 3736 Montrose Rd., Birmingham, AL 35213.

—Juanita Velasco

At Charleston, Circular Church, the Choir, Madrigals, and Circular Players present a Christmas service of carols and readings at the Dec. 12 morning service. Ron Skaggs found an old print of the Third Circular Church (very similar to the present 4th structure). Copies are on sale in the church foyer at \$1.00.

Bert Keller, Pastor, returned from his vacation in France.



Members of First Church, Andalusia, Ala., hosted the special S. Ala.-NW Fla. Association Bicentennial meeting on Sept. 19, with representatives attending from Baker and Bonifay, Florida; Clio, Headland, Antioch and Andalusia, Alabama.

Rev. Woody Clark, pastor of the Church, led the opening worship. Each church had

one member to give its history, with displays, pictures, and other memos dating back a century ago. Antioch dated back 103 years and was one of the first log churches in the area.

Following a message from Mr. Clark, fellowship and supper were enjoyed in the fellowship hall of the Church.

—Estelle Gilmer

NEWS BRIEFS

A Gift to Pilgrim Church, Birmingham, a white Colonial Bible Stand, with locked glass-enclosed case, has been obtained by Dr. and Mrs. S.L. Johnson. The gift comes from the Memorial Fund to Alice's mother, Mrs. Thomas Duncan, who lived with the Johnsons in Birmingham during Dr. Johnson's pastorate. Mrs. Duncan was made a member of the Order of the British Empire by Queen Elizabeth II for her work in assisting English war brides after World War I. The stand will hold the historic Bible given to Pilgrim Church in 1934 by Carr's Lane Church, Birmingham, England, the mother church of Congregationalism.

Doris Brewster, member of Sweetwater Church (Tenn.), is an intern in Dietetics at Parkridge Hospital, Chattanooga. She is a senior at U.T.K. and is a frequent attendant at Pilgrim Church.

It's Not Too Late for Christmas plays. Pilgrim Church, Chattanooga, TN., has developed a Christmas pageant which requires one hour of rehearsal, no memorization, any number of children, and very little costume preparation — and it works!

Morgan-Scott

Project

One of the churches in Morgan-Scott Project needs a Communion Set. With only 20 members, this item is hard to purchase. If there is an old set collecting dust, please share it.

The Community Center in the project needs NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC magazines for their new study center.

The Christmas Store needs new clothing, toys, games, sports equipment, crafts, caps/mittens, etc. Items to be sold at low cost to low-income families for their own tree. Sponsors willing to add a name to their Christmas list are urgently needed.

Contact:

Rev. Randy Gehres
P.O. Box 8
Deer Lodge, TN 37726

St. John's Church, Cullman, AL, honored 42 new members received this year, at the Annual Thanksgiving Supper for all members Thanksgiving Eve. Pastor Fidler's note to the congregation: THANK YOU for \$2100 on \$20 Sunday this year! You are the Greatest!!!

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION

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SIGNATURE AND TITLE OF EDITOR, PUBLISHER, BUSINESS MANAGER, OR OWNER			

United Church of Christ President Moss Dies

The Rev. Robert V. Moss, Jr., President of the United Church of Christ, and noted ecumenist, died of cancer on Monday, Oct. 25, 1976 in a New Jersey hospital. He was 54 years old and a resident of Upper Montclair, N.J.

William Thompson, President of the National Council of the Churches of Christ said that Mr. Moss had been deeply committed to the unity of Christ's church and to the struggles for racial justice and human rights.

He had a deep commitment to the prophetic tradition of social justice, as stated by the head of the American Jewish Committee, Bertram H. Gold.

Mr. Moss had been president of the UCC since 1969 and was also an out-spoken champion of liberal causes, secular or religious.

He was also a vice president of the National Council of Churches, chairman of its Commission on Faith and Order, and a member of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches. He frequently voiced support of amnesty for Vietnam war resisters.

When Dr. Moss was elected seven years ago to the first of two four-year terms as President of his church, he urged the denomination to "pursue relentlessly and with singleness of purpose absolute equality for the black man and his right to determine his own destiny."

"We have become keenly aware of our separation from the poor, the black and the powerless in this world," he said in his acceptance speech.

"They are our brothers. We know clearly that they rightly have something against us. We must take a step toward reconciliation and declare our unity with the dispossessed of the world."

A Biblical scholar and theologian, Dr. Moss was President of Lancaster Theological Seminary, Lancaster, Pa., from 1957 until his election as President in 1969. When he became president of the divinity school, he was one of the nation's youngest seminary presidents.

In 1970, Dr. Moss urged all religious bodies to call women to "highly visible" positions of responsibility. And under his prodding, the United Church of Christ established a Task Force on Women in 1971.

Early this year, Dr. Moss led a team of 25 leaders of the United Church on a tour of the Far East to examine reports of oppression in Indonesia, martial law in the Philippines, and the divided Christian church in Japan.

[Continued on page 6]

Good Report from Mission Seminar

An excellent Mission Seminar was held at Lanett, Ala. Oct. 29-31. Forty persons from 12 churches came together and had some very instructive sessions with leaders of our United Church of Christ.

The Lanett Church provided two meals. On Sunday morning, Rev. Paul Gregory

brought an inspiring message concerning churches in other parts of the world. An appeal was made for support of the kinds of ministry that heal the hurts and satisfy the hunger of human beings who have little or no hope.

TO ELEANOR — On Our 56th Wedding Anniversary

By Otto L. Culpepper
Tallasse, Alabama

We have come a long way together
Since that day we said "I do",
Through sickness and health, Through
poverty and suffering,
But we've kept our love sweet and true.
We've weathered all kinds of storms to-
gether,
And sometimes the going was rough;
But, regardless of pain, I'd do it all over
again
And more if that was not enough.
Who cares if our faces are lined with age
And our hair is turning grey?
We're still in love in the same old way.
Through thick and thin we've stood to-
gether
It'll always be that way, I know;
Yes, we've come a long way together
And still have a long way to go.
Eleanor, let me hold your hand as we
climb the last hill;
Together, we've shared our love and we
share it still;
It hasn't been easy to make the climb
But it would have been impossible without
your hand in mine.

Like the lakes, our life has had its ripples,
too;
Ill health, worries, and payments due;
At the top of the hill we'll stop to rest
And remember how God has so wonder-
fully blest.
We've been spared the grief of being torn
apart
By divorce or a broken heart;
The view ahead is one of the best
Just a little further and we can rest.
We move more slowly but together still;
Eleanor, let me hold your hand as we
climb the last hill.

All my love,
Otto

DURING JANUARY

- Jan. 6 - Epiphany
- Jan. 16 - Ordination of James Fields,
Plymouth Church, Charleston
- Jan. 30 - Installation of John Lackey,
Church of the Savior, Knoxville

During January, incorporate "Let's Celebrate the Church" in your planning for Confirmation and adult membership classes. Use the stewardship Council Spring 1977 Packet (arrives January 25) for Christian Enlistment, Family Thank-

Pierre, Where Are You?

Do you speak French? Are you a farmer or were you raised on a farm? Are you committed to the worldwide mission of the church to serve in cross-cultural settings in genuine partnership with local colleagues? If so, "Pierre" (or Henri or John, or Bill), have we the job for you! You are needed, badly needed in Togo, a French-speaking new nation of West Africa. Speaking French is essential. Being a practical type of farmer is also most important (if a tractor or pump goes out, you may have to fix it with chewing gum and baling wire!) Actually, the job calls for an "agriculturalist" or an "agronomist," but practicality is more important than book-learning for this position in an agricultural extension program at Atakpame in northern Togo. Christian commitment is important, too. If you are interested in learning more about this position, or about others now available overseas through our church, call or write:

Overseas Personnel Office
United Church Board for World
Ministries
475 Riverside Drive
New York, N.Y. 10027

Family Thank Offering What Is It? What For?

1. United Church Board for World Ministries will get \$100,000 for "Training and Aid in Agricultural Development". With much of the world in desperate need of food, this will help in training people to teach countrymen in how to produce more from the land. Its aim is to help alleviate world hunger.
2. United Church Board for Homeland Ministries will get \$75,000 to help poverty-stricken families in the South, especially Appalachia.
3. The Board for Homeland Ministries will also receive \$75,000 for use in teaching the meaning of being good stewards of all that is around us.

Offering, etc. Order the Easter Filmstrip, "Alive", from Stewardship Council, 1505 Race St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19102. Start now to reach potential new members during Lenten season (Feb. 23 through Easter, April 10). Order "Fellowship of Prayer" for use during Lent from Eden Publishing House, 1724 Chouteau Ave., St. Louis, Mo. 63103.

Dr. Joseph Evans Assumes Presidency of UCC

The Rev. Dr. Joseph H. Evans, New York, was elected President of the United Church of Christ by the denomination's Executive Council, following the death of Dr. Moss on October 25.

Dr. Evans is the third president of the denomination and the first black in the post. His term will run until Sept. 30, 1977.

Long active in ecumenical affairs, Dr. Evans was chosen president in part to continue the leading role the United Church has taken in the National and World Councils of Churches and in fostering church union.

Born in Kalamazoo, Mich., Dr. Evans was graduated from Western Michigan University and Yale Divinity School. He held pastorates in Chicago, Cleveland, and New York City, and was secretary of the Connecticut Council of Churches. He is a member of the Executive Committee of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

THE END OF THE YEAR

The end of the year is a good time to look back over the past twelve months and assess your progress toward whatever goals you may have established a year ago. Time, too, to look ahead and make personal goals for the future. It is true for an individual; true also for a congregation.

Have you fulfilled any pledge or other financial commitment you have made to your congregation for 1976? If not, there is still time to update your stewardship of church support. The generosity which we Christians feel at Christmas makes this a good time to "catch up" on our intentions for church support.

The same theme applies to a congregation's stewardship and to any goals for our Christian World Mission it may have accepted for 1976. There is still time for treasurers of local churches to forward such money to the Conference Treasurer for the wider mission through the conference and national agencies of the United Church of Christ.

The end of the year is our last chance to do something about this. Our deadline for receiving 1976 payments on OCWM in the Southeast Conference Office is: January 11, 1977.

"OUR CHURCH IS ALIVE, GOD"

The United Church Board for World Ministries held its 167th Annual Meeting at Salem, Mass., Oct. 17-20. It was very exciting to learn all the work our church is doing throughout the world.

I am aware of the mission which our church is carrying out in New Hampshire throughout many local churches: youth programs, Christian Education, programs for elderly, food banks for the hungry, etc. I am aware also of the work of the New Hampshire Conference, such as Unit Camping, the Retirement Community, diaconate workshops, local church retreats, stewardship planning, etc. When one adds to this the mission which is carried out through Our Christian World Mission, one can only praise God and say "OUR CHURCH IS ALIVE, GOD!"

I was impressed to learn that 180 missionaries represent us in 33 countries! I was pleased to learn that our church is still at work even in the midst of the war zone. Our mission includes hospitals, schools, seminaries, engineering and agricultural training centers around the world. The most exciting news was that our church is now implementing a two-way six-continent thrust in missions; that is, missionaries from other countries are beginning to come to us to witness to their faith; indeed, many are going to various mission centers along with our missionaries. OUR CHURCH IS ALIVE, GOD, and we circle the globe with the Christian message and the love of Christ! The United Church of Christ has mission centers on all six continents and because "we" have faith and care our church is there! Thanks be to God for Our Christian World Mission, which begins in your church!

—Robert D. Fiske, Editor

Christmas Is . . .

from page 1

that the Word (Logos) became incarnate in a human being. The Christian Community, followers of the incarnate Word, know what they must do — love their neighbor and love their God as revealed in Jesus Christ, and they can do this for the Word (Logos) bestowed the power of eternal life upon them.

Let all mortal flesh keep silence,
And with fear and trembling stand;
Ponder nothing earthly-minded,
For with blessing in His hand,
Christ our God to earth descendeth,
Our full homage to demand.

(Liturgy of St. James)
—W.T. Andes

Progress Reported at Milk's Camp



Milk's Camp Industries, a cooperative industry employing more than a dozen Indian families in the Bonesteel and St. Charles area, dedicated a new facility earlier this year. More than 500 people, including the State's Governor, Richard Kneip, attended the open house, luncheon, and tour. Milk's Camp Industries is the only industrial manufacturer in Gregory County and is the only private industry owned by Indians in the region.

Milk's Camp Industries, which has received support from local congregations, the South Dakota Conference, and various national agencies of the United Church of Christ since its founding ten years ago, has now produced over one million novelty tom-toms! By 1978, Milk's Camp novelty totem poles will take their place beside the tom-toms in gift shops throughout the U.S. and Canada.

This industry provides a major source of income for the population of Milk's Camp, a small village on the Rosebud Sioux Indian Reservation. The name, Milk's Camp, refers to the fact that the community was settled many years ago by the families of Chief Milk and Chief Swift Bear. Having its own small industry makes a tremendous difference to the community. School attendance has gone up. A new Boy Scout troop has been established. Young people have found motivation for remaining in Milk's Camp rather than drifting off to the cities. Milk's Camp Industries also provides work for the handicapped through a contract with the South Dakota Service to the Visually Impaired in Sioux Falls. A new spirit is evident in the people of Milk's Camp. And the future begins to look brighter for the next generation.

Attending the UC Board for World Ministries meeting from Southeast Conference were: Freda Brown, George Percival, and Warren Blankenhorn.

Celebrate Christmas — Tell About UCC

"What can you give us that will help our congregation to know more about the work of the United Church of Christ, more about its mission?" How often our conference and national staff persons hear that question! A wide variety of materials are available for local congregations which show what the UCC is and does. These two also are appropriate for Christmas:

Let All The World Rejoice! \$12.00. A 15-minute color filmstrip with recordings that uses simple, fresh words to tell the Christmas story. Activities for making Christmas more meaningful are suggested and are related to glimpses of the church at work in the world. The soundtrack includes a variety of Christmas music and the audience is encouraged to sing along with some of it.

Tidings of Joy \$12.00. A 10-minute color filmstrip with recording, using colorful cartoon figures to tell the real significance of Christmas. In the style of Dickens, a cynic causes a young girl to think of Christmas. Two visitors help her to realize the deeper, Biblical meanings of Christmas. The audience participates in the singing.

Order both from Office for Audio-Visuals, United Church of Christ, 1505 Race St., Philadelphia, PA 19102.

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President Moss Dies . . .

[From page 3]

Midway in the tour, he undertook a trip to Seoul to protest the South Korean Government's arrest of 27 Korean Christians.

One of Dr. Moss's last official acts was to bring about an agreement for the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to undertake discussions aimed at eventual union of the two denominations.

Dr. Moss was born in Wilson, N.C., graduated from Franklin and Marshall College and Lancaster Seminary, and in 1954 received a Doctor of Philosophy degree from University of Chicago.

Dr. Moss was one of 32 official Protestant observers at the Second Vatican Council and was a delegate to the third assembly of the World Council of Churches in New Delhi in 1961.

From 1966 to 1968 he was co-chairman of the Roman Catholic-Presbyterian and Reformed Dialogue Group, and during the same two-year period, he served as president of the American Association of Theological Schools.

Dr. Moss leaves his wife, the former Junia Evelyn Keppel; three sons: John, Robert III, and Timothy; two sisters, a brother, and his parents.

A memorial service was held at First Congregational Church in Montclair, N.J.

UCC and Christian Church Plan Union Talks

Officials of the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) are recommending to their respective national organizations formal merger talks in 1977.

The plan was agreed on at a meeting last month attended by representatives of the two denominations. Participants concluded the two denominations are already working together at many levels and the time is right to explore full-scale unification.

The 1.8 million-member UCC is strongest in New England and the Midwest. The 1.3 million-member Christian Church is strongest in the Midwest and Southwest. Both have congregational-type governments.

NEARLY DEAD

"Well, how are things at Nearly Dead Memorial?"

I really got sick of this bit of fun poked at me week after week at the Monday morning preachers' meetings in Atlanta. My first full-time pastorate after graduating from seminary was the Nellie Dodd Memorial Methodist Church in Atlanta, several blocks south of the present location of the Atlanta Stadium. Nellie Dodd was a wonderful little church, but preachers can be stinkers, and it used to hurt my feelings when they called it "Nearly Dead".

I also get a bit annoyed when people disparage the Federated Church, Demorest, Ga., by saying that it is nearly dead. Of course, when you're a minister, you're supposed to be sweet, but the reply I really feel like making to such comments is in the grand style of Lester Maddox, "Phooey!"

A lot of live-wire things are happening around our church these days. The improvements being made on our church building are obvious. The old girl is gobbling up gallons of paint. From the way she's perking up, she must like paint better than Foster Brooks likes booze.

Several weeks ago three women apprehended the pastor and said: "We want two new Sunday School classes. If you'll see that there are teachers, we'll see that the members are there." The result is five classes for youth and young adults.

Our choir, under the direction of Mrs. Ogden, is working hard. Unless there is something wrong with your ears, you know what fine music they turn out.

The Federated Church is such a cantankerous old gal that saying "Nearly Dead" to her is like saying "Sickem" to a dog. Don't start funeralizing her; she's liable to bite a chunk out of your leg.

Then, they entertained the Georgia-South Carolina Association Oct. 23-24, in fine style and gracious manner!

—John Bridges, Pastor
Demorest Federated Church

A Prayer from 1976 Family Thank Offering materials:

O Lord, sometimes we feel helpless and hopeless as we face life. Remind us daily of those who are forgotten, who are truly without help and without hope as the face life. Guide us as we plan our lives and resources so that we may bring a ray of hope as we make help available to these families. Amen."

UCC Nominating Committee Asks Names for Offices

The nominating committee for the 11th General Synod has called for names to be submitted by Dec. 20 from Conferences and individuals for nomination to Synod to fill national UCC offices.

Synod delegates, in July 1977, will elect the President of the Church, the director of finance and treasurer, the moderator, assistant moderators, members of the Executive Council, and members of national agency boards and directorate.

The post of moderator is filled alternately by a clergy and a lay person. The next moderator will be a layman or laywoman. Assistant moderators must be one lay person — woman or man — and one minister. All other offices are open to both laity and clergy, without sex discrimination.

The following information is needed for each nominee: name and address, age, ecclesiastical status (lay, ordained or commissioned worker), local church membership, occupation, denominational and interfaith service, offices held and vocational interests, racial background.

UCC bylaws require that each agency directorate be made up of one-third ordained ministers or commissioned workers, one-third laymen, one-third lay women and 20% under age 30 when terms commence. Nomination forms must be obtained from and returned to: UCC Nominating Committee, 297 Park Ave., South, New York, 10010. Deadline: Dec. 20.

Tax Reform Packet Available

The Economic and Racial Justice Priority Team of the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries announces the availability of a new packet of materials on tax reform.

The new Tax-Reform Packet contains a copy of a recent *Journal of Current Social Issues* which deals with this subject, together with a special use-guide, papers and testimony on taxes and tax justice, and a resource listing. The packet is available for \$2.00 postpaid from:

Arthur Keyes
United Church Board for Homeland
Ministries
287 Park Avenue S. Room 811
New York, NY 10010